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The Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Commission has formulated a statement as the guiding philosophy for its deliberations on Minnesota's long-range, comprehensive higher education plans. The Commission's basic position for viewing higher education in Minnesota during the next 10 years involves (1) the development of human resources through advanced education to achieve and maintain a productive economic, social and cultural environment, (2) the attainment of higher levels of educational productivity to the extent necessary to provide for satisfactory progress in the complex and technologically advanced society of the future, (3) the recognition and support of teaching, research, and public service as 3 complementary but separate functions of higher education that interrelate to produce or distribute knowledge and skills, and (4) the provision of large investments to meet rising costs and to support the continued development of higher education. The Commission supplements this proposed view of higher education with 6 principles that they recognize to be fundamental to the concept of higher education. The statement also contains 8 of the goals identified by the Commission as general aims of higher education in Minnesota. (WM)

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A PHILOSOPHY FOR MINNESOTA HIGHER EDUCATION

A View of Higher Education

Some Fundamental Principles

Goals for Higher Education

MINNESOTA
HIGHER EDUCATION
COORDINATING COMMISSION

March, 1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE, AND THE CITIZENS
OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

On behalf of the members of the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Commission, I am pleased to transmit A Philosophy for Minnesota Higher Education.

In accordance with its legislative charge, the Commission has embarked upon an ambitious program of comprehensive planning for Minnesota higher education. The statement of philosophy which is presented here is a first, but important, building block in the planning process. The view, the principles, and the goals of higher education as expressed in this philosophy serve to guide Commission deliberations on the continuing development of higher education in Minnesota.

Recommendations which reflect the statement of philosophy will be based upon study and research in which the Commission is currently engaged. The first of these recommendations will be available within the next few months. Both the members and the staff of the Commission stand ready to assist you in your consideration of A Philosophy for Minnesota Higher Education.

Sincerely,

Leonard E. Lindquist

LEONARD E. LINDQUIST
President

INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Legislature has directed the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to study Minnesota higher education continuously and to develop programs and long-range plans to meet present and future needs. Implicit in this charge is the recognition that the State of Minnesota has a responsibility for providing higher educational opportunities. The legislative mandate is interpreted by the Commission to encompass post-high school education which is offered by both public and private institutions at all levels, including that provided by vocational and technical schools, colleges, and universities.

Over a period of years the people of Minnesota and their representatives in state and local government have established a record of support for education, particularly in the field of elementary and secondary public education, that ranks the state among the best in the nation. In recent years there has been substantial response to the needs of greatly increased numbers seeking higher education, but this growth is far from complete.

During the decade ahead, higher education enrollments will nearly double. The past actions of the people and their government provide the bases from which we must respond to the challenge before us. Planning combined with the necessary support of the people will assure Minnesota's role as a leader in higher education in the next decade.

Conducting the kind of continuous and comprehensive planning with which the Legislature has charged the Commission is a challenging undertaking. The questions which can be raised about the future development of Minnesota higher education and factors which must be assessed in considering alternative means for meeting future needs are both numerous and complex. Such planning cannot be conducted in a vacuum.

The context in which effective comprehensive planning must be accomplished includes many things. It includes the present status of Minnesota higher education and the existing arrangement of institutions. It includes national as well as local trends, both past and present, in higher education. It includes the many forces which impinge upon higher education from the various sectors of society.

Clearly, this planning context also must include a philosophy of higher education for the State of Minnesota. Systematic planning which produces consistent and effective decisions cannot be achieved in the absence of agreement on (1) a general view of higher education and its place in Minnesota, (2) the basic principles which should guide the continuing development of higher education, and (3) the

goals which Minnesota higher education should be aimed at achieving. It is to the formulation of a philosophy that the Commission necessarily has first directed attention.

The statement of philosophy which has been formulated by the Commission to guide planning appears on the following pages. It emphasizes the provision of educational opportunities which enable the individual to develop his potential. It is based upon the belief that education, in its primary role, enlarges the understanding and augments the knowledge and skills of the individual, and in so doing it advances the society of which the individual is a part. Conversely, in contributing to the advancement of the state and society, higher education benefits the individual.

The statement which follows represents an emerging philosophy in that it is tentative and subject to further development and modification during the next few months as the Commission continues its work on recommendations to be presented to the Governor and the Legislature. It is recommended to the people of the state, the Governor, and the Legislature at this time in order that all may know and react to the kind of thinking which is guiding the Commission's planning efforts.

A VIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The use of rich and plentiful natural resources has made Minnesota a great state. Fertile and varied land, an abundance of water resources, rich ore deposits, and a strategic geographical location have provided a foundation for Minnesota's long tradition of productivity in agriculture, industry, and the distribution of goods and services throughout the nation and the world. Its climate, scenic beauty and wildlife are major attractions for sportsmen, vacationers, and all who seek adventure in nature. Recognition of the importance of these resources has made their development a matter of public responsibility.

But Minnesota's greatest resource has been, and will continue to be, its people. Without the application of their vision, talents, skills, and energies, Minnesota's other resources are useless. It is people who must apply their cultivated abilities to the utilization of all other resources in building a prosperous economy and a social order in which each person can lead a meaningful, productive, and satisfying existence. *It is because of the fundamental role of human talent in the progress of Minnesota that the discussion which follows is based upon the premise that developing human resources must be assigned first priority in any realistic effort to provide for future economic, social, and cultural growth of Minnesota.* This is a prime matter of public responsibility.

Foundation for Progress

Recognizing that knowledge and man's ability to use it are the foundation for economic and social progress, Minnesota has made increasingly large investments in the education of its citizens. As the need for all citizens to have some formal education became evident, Minnesota took steps to provide elementary education for all. As completion of the elementary grades became an inadequate level of educational attainment for the average citizen, Minnesota took additional steps to make secondary education available to all. Since its very beginning, Minnesota has provided higher education for a portion of the population which possessed the ability, interest, and financial means for education beyond high school. While Minnesota's dedication to an educated citizenry has required a substantial investment, the returns have been even more substantial.

Such returns are evident not only in terms of the economic advancements of the state and its citizens over the years, but equally in terms of social and cultural developments which are essential to the ideals of a good life in a free and democratic society in which government exists to serve the individual. A prosperous democratic society is dependent upon individuals having the educational levels needed to contribute effectively to technological development and

economic growth, as well as upon a citizenry with a social consciousness and a quality of life with concern for human values which extend beyond those relating only to individual economic well-being and society's technological progress.

As life in our society has become more complex and as rapid technological change has caused drastic reductions in opportunities for unskilled workers (along with equally astounding increases in the need for professional, technical, and skilled personnel), a larger proportion of the population has aspired to higher education, and Minnesota has increased its investment in education beyond high school. All indications of things to come point to more rapid technological and social change, more complexity in our society, a continuing reduction in the opportunities for unskilled workers, and substantially greater need for the well educated and the highly trained. Thus it seems evident that the time is very near – if indeed it has not already arrived – when Minnesota, if it is to be assured of future prosperity, must provide post-secondary education for most of its citizens. *Moreover, recognizing the value of personnel with advanced education and the liability to the state of the unskilled, every high school graduate who has reasonable capacity to profit from further education should be actively encouraged to enter an appropriate program of post-secondary education, and every effort should be made to remove barriers to post-secondary education.* This is a matter of urgency.

Importance of Quality

But, simply extending the number of years of formal education for a larger proportion of the population will not be sufficient to assure the future economic and social development of Minnesota. The educational opportunities provided for residents of the state must be of sufficient quality to justify the necessary financial investment to be made by the state and the even greater investment of money, time, and energies to be made by the student. The very same factors which create the increasing need for education are creating an even greater need for improvements in the *quality* of education. The problem is not simply one of producing more people who can be given the title of lawyer, engineer, teacher, manager, mechanic, technician, accountant, secretary or laboratory assistant. The real need is to prepare people who will be truly competent to apply their training and abilities constructively in such positions to the solution of increasingly difficult problems and who will make effective contributions to economic and social development in a rapidly changing and increasingly complicated social and technological environment.

Improving, and even maintaining, the quality of higher education is unusually difficult during times such as the present when (1) knowledge is being discovered, extended, and revised at a rate so

rapid as to require constant reorganization and revision of instructional materials, courses, programs, and even disciplines; (2) technologies are developing so rapidly that equipment which is regarded as experimental one year, may be basic to work in one or more fields the next year, and may be obsolete the following year; (3) well-qualified educational administrators, scholars, and teachers are in serious short supply; and (4) conflicting forces and increasing demands from all segments of society for varied services of higher education place serious strains upon institutions, institutional administrators, and faculties. Moreover, there is always a strong temptation to sacrifice quality for quantity as an expediency during times of expansion. Such temptation must be resisted; trading quality education for quantity education is no bargain. Both individuals and the State lose in such a trade. *While Minnesota has made important strides in increasing both the quantity and quality of education in recent years, quantity has been increased more substantially than has quality. Every possible effort must be made to further improve the quality of higher education in Minnesota.* This is a matter of immediate, as well as long-range, concern.

Three Purposes of Higher Education

Transmitting knowledge through the education of members of each new generation, however, is but one of three basic purposes of higher education. In addition, it is the purpose of higher education to extend knowledge through research and scholarship and to apply knowledge through extension and direct service to government, business, and other segments of society. The three missions of higher education – teaching, research, and public service – are interrelated. They all are concerned with either the production or the distribution of the most useful of all commodities: knowledge. They all have as their ultimate goal the providing of man with the foundation and skill to adapt to, and to modify, his physical, social, and economic environment in order to facilitate his well-being and usefulness. All three functions are vital to the future progress of Minnesota.

In the proper proportions, and with appropriate recognition and funding for each of the three functions, they are complementary, and they strengthen one another. However, the performance of any one function without due support can seriously interfere with effective performance of the other two. Stealing resources needed for instructional programs to support inadequately funded research, for example, requires a sacrifice of either quality or quantity in the educational program. *Teaching, research, and public service must be recognized as three interrelated and complementary, but distinctive, functions of higher education, and Minnesota's investment in higher education must provide appropriate support for each.* This is a matter of realistic assessment and understanding of the higher educational enterprise.

Planning the Investment

Developing Minnesota's human resources to the extent necessary to provide for the effective utilization of other resources in achieving and maintaining a healthy and productive economic, social, and cultural environment in future years will require substantial investments. However, just as present generations are reaping rich returns from previous investments in human resources, there is every reason to expect that Minnesota will benefit substantially from future dividends on new investments in its human resources.

While all the needs of higher education will not be met by the mere expenditure of additional public funds, expenditures certainly will have to be increased. It appears that all costs will continue to rise. Stimulating larger proportions of the population to pursue education beyond high school and removing barriers to post-secondary education will require new expenditures. Accommodating larger numbers and providing programs which are consistent with their varied interests and abilities will require additional expenditures. Just maintaining present levels of quality will require increased expenditures, and improving quality will be dependent upon an even greater investment. Providing appropriate support for the research and service functions of higher education will continue to be costly.

As with any opportunity which offers the prospect of great returns, the investment must be large. And as with any large investment from limited funds, the investment must be carefully planned. Objectives must be clearly stated. Realistic priorities must be established and followed. Delineation of responsibilities must be made meaningful and programs must be coordinated to achieve economy of effort. Resources must be utilized in such a way as to provide for a maximum return on the investment. *Recognition of Minnesota's interest in higher education, establishment of goals, formulation of goal-oriented policies, coordination of effort, and careful planning must provide the guidelines for future investments in higher education.* This is a matter of practical necessity.

The Basic Position

The foregoing suggests a basic position from which the State of Minnesota should view higher education during the next decade. Briefly, this position can be stated as follows:

1. Because of the fundamental role of human talent in economic, social, and cultural progress in Minnesota, the development of human resources through advanced education is a prime matter of public responsibility.
2. Developing Minnesota's human resources to the extent necessary to provide for satisfactory progress in the more complex

and technologically advanced society of the future will require the reaching of new and higher levels of educational productivity, both in terms of the numbers of people to be educated beyond the secondary school and of the quality of education provided.

3. Teaching, research, and public service must be recognized as three complementary but distinctive functions of higher education, all of which are aimed at providing the foundation of knowledge and skills in using knowledge essential to achieving economic prosperity and a viable social order; appropriate levels of support must be provided for each of the three basic functions.

4. Necessary improvements in educational productivity and rising costs will require large investments, the return on which will be highly favorable; because the need is great and the required investment is large, the continuing development of higher education must be (a) based upon careful comprehensive planning, (b) related to meaningful policies and clear objectives, and (c) accomplished through a well-coordinated effort designed to assure educational effectiveness and reasonable economy of effort.

SOME FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Accepting a basic position with respect to higher education is a necessary first step for a realistic attempt to meet the emerging needs of Minnesota. To be adequate, however, this proposed view of higher education must be supplemented by a strong commitment to certain principles which have become fundamental to the concept of higher education in a free society. Among these are:

1. *The primary purpose of education is to meet the needs of individuals.* While goals of higher education may be expressed in terms of contributions to society or to the state, the first objective of formal education at all levels is individual development. As that part of the formal education process which begins after completion of secondary school, higher education is concerned with developing the abilities of the individual and with preparing the individual to lead a more meaningful and satisfying life, as well as a more productive and useful existence. So it is that the objectives and responsibilities of post-secondary institutions, educational programs and educators are properly determined and stated in terms of the individual's needs as they relate to his capability to understand his environment and to function socially, culturally and vocationally. Since it is the utilization of cultivated talents by individuals who can function effectively that most benefits a free society, education designed to serve the needs of individuals best serves the needs of the state.

2. *Students are given reasonable choice in selecting the kinds of educational programs they will pursue and where they will pursue them.* This is consistent with the democratic ideal of the right to determine one's own destiny and of equal opportunity. However, in keeping with the ideals of a freely competitive society, the student must meet the qualifications and requirements for entrance into the program and institution of his choosing.

3. *The opportunity to pursue post-secondary education is made available to all regardless of race, religion, sex or socio-economic status.* This is consistent with the belief in basic human dignity.

4. *Education is controlled by citizens.* The governance of higher education by lay boards of trustees serves to keep it consistent with the needs and interests of the people and to bridge any gaps between the academic community and the larger society. While the operation of institutions, the designing and conducting of programs, and the selection of means for fulfilling

purposes and achieving objectives are delegated to professional educators, over-all policy formulation and governance are within the province of lay citizen boards. Board members have a basic responsibility for keeping policies consistent with needs for the services of higher education. With the support and protection of effective boards, professional educators can fulfill their responsibilities for basing decisions and actions upon sound educational considerations.

5. *The teacher and the researcher are free to pursue truth and knowledge to any conclusions which may result from scholarly inquiries in their fields of expertise.* The search for and reporting of truth is the first responsibility of the academician. Since the status of knowledge is always incomplete and tentative, the scholar must be free to challenge that which has been accepted and to generate new findings and ideas which may not be consistent with prevailing beliefs.

6. *A comprehensive system of higher education includes both publicly and privately controlled institutions.* A significant characteristic of American higher education has been the strength and diversity afforded by the dual contributions of two separate sets of institutions – one group being privately controlled and the other publicly controlled. While their methods of operation have differed, they both have worked diligently to achieve essentially the same goal.

GOALS FOR MINNESOTA HIGHER EDUCATION

The objectives of comprehensive planning must relate to and emanate from broad goals which can be accepted and supported as the general aims of Minnesota higher education. Among the goals which have been identified by the Commission are:

1. To provide an educated citizenry through developing individual capacities and cultivating the values, interest, attitudes, talents, intellect, and motivations which characterize an educated person.

2. To provide a pool of well-qualified personnel to serve the manpower needs of local communities, the state of Minnesota, and the nation.

3. To serve as a dynamic force in shaping society and fostering future economic, cultural, and social progress.

4. To provide access to and encourage the utilization of alternative opportunities for education beyond high school through diverse educational programs for varying levels and types of abilities.

5. To extend, test, and revise knowledge through research and scholarly inquiry and to disseminate the results of such inquiries through publication and other means.

6. To foster excellence in teaching and research by the well-qualified teacher-scholar in the best possible facilities.

7. To facilitate and to stimulate life-long learning through continuing education of adults.

8. To apply the resources and expertise within the community of higher education to direct services to the larger community to the fullest extent that such services are consistent with the teaching and research functions of higher education.

The foregoing statement of philosophy is presented to the people and their elected representatives in the belief that general acceptance of such a statement can have a significant impact upon future contributions of higher education to progress in Minnesota. The philosophy which guides comprehensive planning certainly will have a profound effect upon the kinds of recommendations which are made by this Commission. Thus this statement has been developed and presented as a means to an end and not as an end in and of itself.

Recommendations which reflect the views presented in this statement and refined during the next few months will be based upon the study and research in which the Commission is currently engaged.